IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1, 6, 10, 14, 26-28 and 30 as shown in the attached Appendix. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows.

1.　(Four Times Amended) In an information input device, the combination of:

means for inputting first information;

means for receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and for storing such received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

means for using said software to generate a digital signature and to encrypt said first information based upon said secret key information; and

means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature, whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

2.　(Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 1, wherein said information is image data.

3.　(Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 1, wherein the means for generating a digital signature carries out an operation and outputs said digital signature.

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4.   (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 3, wherein said operation uses public key cryptography.

5.   (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 3, wherein said operation for obtaining a digital signature uses RSA cryptosystem.

6.   (Four Times Amended) An information input device comprising:

means for inputting first information;

means for compressing said first information;

means for receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and for storing said received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

means for using said software to generate a distinguishing information and to encrypt said first information compressed by said compressing means based on said secret key information; and

means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

wherein said external device stores the secret key corresponding to a registered user; and

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

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7. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 6, wherein said information is image data.

8. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 6, wherein said means for generating carries out an operation and outputs said distinguishing information.

9. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 8, wherein said operation is for obtaining a digital signature as said distinguishing information by using a RSA cryptosystem.

10. (Four Times Amended) An image input apparatus comprising:

an image input device for inputting said image data;

means for receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature based on said secret key information from an external device;

a memory for storing said software and said secret key information which is received from said external device, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

an operation device for carrying out an operation using said software to produce a digital signature and encrypt said image data based on the secret key information; and

means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

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whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

11. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 10, wherein said operating device carries out an operation and outputs said distinguishing information.

12. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 11, wherein said operation is for obtaining a digital signature as said distinguishing information by using a public key cryptosystem.

13. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An information input device according to claim 11, wherein said operation is for obtaining a digital signature as said distinguishing information by using a RSA cryptosystem.

14. (Four Times Amended) In an image input system:

a first terminal device for inputting image data;

a second terminal device for receiving secret key information from an external device and an algorithm for generating a digital signature, said second terminal device having a memory for storing said received secret key information, said secret key information being information which corresponds to a user;

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an operation device for executing a command based on said algorithm for generating a digital signature and encrypting said image data based upon said secret key information; and

means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

15.	(Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 14, wherein said algorithm is based on a public key cryptosystem.

16.	(Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 15, wherein said secret information is a secret key of said public key cryptosystem.

17.	(Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 14, wherein said algorithm is based on a RSA cryptosystem.

18.	(Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 14, further having a CODEC for compressing the image data based on a compression algorithm.

19.	(Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 18, wherein said compression algorithm is based on MPEG standard.

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20. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An image input system according to claim 18, wherein said compression algorithm is based upon JPEG standard.

26. (Four Times Amended) An information input method comprising:

inputting first information into an information input device;

receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and for storing the received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

executing said software to generate a digital signature and to encrypt said first information based upon said received secret key information; and

outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

27. (Four Times Amended) A computer readable memory programmed to cooperate with a data processor and an information input unit to carry out:

a step of inputting first information into an information input device;

a step of receiving secret key information and software for generating a digital signature from an external device and storing the received secret key information and said software, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device;

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a step of using said software to generate a digital signature and to encrypt said first information based upon said secret key information received from the external device; and

a step of outputting said first information containing said digital signature, whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

28.   (Amended) An apparatus which is detachable from an information device comprising:

means for receiving digital data from the information device;

means for storing a secret key and software for generating a digital signature;

processing means for generating said digital signature and for encrypting said digital data based upon said secret key and said software; and

means for outputting the digital signature to the information device.

29.   (Not Changed From Prior Version) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said apparatus is a mobile terminal device.

30   (Amended) A method for supplying a digital signature by use of apparatus which is detachable to an information device, said method comprising:

receiving digital data from the information device;

storing a secret key and software for generating a digital signature;

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